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P 071609Z MAR 06
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3340
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

UNCLAS KINSHASA 000382

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [CG](#)
SUBJECT: OPERATION SOUTH SENTINEL ENDS WITH FARDC CONTROL
OF THREE TOWNS

REF: KINSHASA 341

¶1. (SBU) Operation South Sentinel, a joint FARDC - MONUC mission against the FDLR in South Kivu (reftel), ended March 5 with 300-400 FDLR troops pushed out of the area and with government control established over Ekingi, Manga, and Chibiroro towns. The towns, all in the Bunyakiri area of South Kivu near Kahuzi Biega National Park, held important, strategic FDLR camps. The camps, which according to MONUC were used to move FDLR troops between South and North Kivu, were destroyed, and at least 3 FDLR were killed. FDLR leader Major Franck and Colonel 106, a Mai Mai commander known to cooperate with the FDLR, fled north with their forces; Colonel 106 was reported to be seriously wounded.

¶2. (SBU) The FARDC Third Integrated Brigade is to remain in the area to prevent the FDLR from returning to harass the population. The MONUC South Kivu Brigade will continue to support -- with transportation, provisioning, and medical evacuation -- the FARDC troops until the security situation is stabilized. Although the operation has officially ended, the FARDC and MONUC will continue to search for FDLR combatants, and DDRRR teams will continue their work.

¶3. (SBU) In a correction to previously reported casualty figures, MONUC listed eighteen FARDC soldiers as wounded and one dead. There were no MONUC casualties.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: Operation South Sentinel was the first joint FARDC-MONUC mission in South Kivu which the FARDC took the lead in planning. Although still unable to support themselves logistically, the FARDC has taken a small step in assuming the duties of a professional army with this successful endeavor. End comment.
MEECE